

In the Claims:

Please amend Claims 1, 23 and 30, and add new Claim 35, all as shown below. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to prosecute any originally presented or canceled claims in a continuing or future application.

1. (Currently Amended) A system for designing a business process, said system comprising:

an introspection module that generates a catalog of generic components by introspecting a set of exposed application programming interfaces (APIs) of a plurality of heterogeneous applications created in different programming languages and transforming a plurality of implementation-specific components of said heterogeneous applications into the generic components of said catalog wherein the catalog contains generic components which, when invoked, are bound to the implementation-specific components of said applications upon execution of the business process; ~~is employed to invoke the plurality of heterogeneous applications from within a business process;~~

a component manager coupled to the introspection module and operable to manage said catalog generated by the introspection module by defining and organizing the generic components in said catalog; and

a process designer coupled to the component manager and operable to:

select at least one of the generic components from said catalog managed by the component manager; and

graphically construct a business process definition that includes a series of graphically represented activities linked by one or more transitions wherein at least one activity of said business process definition invokes the selected generic component from said catalog;

a repository for storing the business process definition; and

one or more process engines that execute said business process definition to instantiate a business process instance, wherein the business process instance interacts with the plurality of heterogeneous applications by invoking the generic components in said catalog and wherein the business process instance integrates the plurality of

heterogeneous applications into a single process by invoking services from the plurality of heterogeneous applications during execution of the activities of said process.

2. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 1, further comprising an organizational repository that includes said catalog, organizational data and a plurality of business processes generated by said process designer.

3. (Original) The system of Claim 1, wherein the introspection module is operable to:
determine an implementation associated with at least one of the implementation-specific components;
retrieve the at least one of the implementation-specific components;
map each of the at least one of the implementation-specific components to a generic component to yield a mapping; and
save the mapping.

4. (Original) The system of Claim 1, wherein the introspection module comprises a plurality of implementation modules, an implementation module operable to retrieve one or more implementation-specific components associated with an implementation.

5. (Original) The system of Claim 1, further comprising a debugger coupled to the process designer and operable to detect an error of the business process.

6. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 1, further comprising:
a data warehouse coupled to the one or more process engines and operable to store transactional data describing the executed business process; and
a data server coupled to the data operable to organize the transactional data.

7-20. (Canceled)

21. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 1 wherein said introspection module further includes at least one implementation module that is used to access implementation-specific components associated with at least one of: Java, Standard Query Language (SQL), Automation, Enterprise JavaBeans (EJB), CORBA, Remote Method Invocation (RMI), Extensible Markup Language (XML) schemas, Web Services and Java Naming and Directory Interface (JNDI).

22. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 21 further comprising:

a binding table containing one or more entries that associate the selected implementation-specific components with generic components from said catalog.

23. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method for designing business processes, said method comprising:

generating a catalog of generic components by introspecting a set of exposed application programming interfaces (APIs) of a plurality of heterogeneous applications implemented in multiple programming languages and translating implementation-specific components of the plurality of applications into generic components of said catalog wherein the catalog contains generic components which, when invoked, are bound to the implementation-specific components of said applications upon execution of the business process; is employed to invoke the plurality of—heterogeneous applications from within a business process;

selecting at least one generic component from the catalog;

graphically constructing one or more business processes definitions, each business process definition including a series of graphically represented activities linked by one or more transitions wherein at least one activity of said business processes invokes the at least one generic component selected from said catalog; and

executing the generated one or more business process definitions at one or more process engines in order to instantiate a business process instance, wherein the business process instance interacts with the plurality of applications by invoking the generic components of said catalog and wherein the business process instance

integrates the plurality of heterogeneous applications into a single process by invoking services from the plurality of heterogeneous applications during execution of the activities of said process.

24. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 23, further comprising:
providing an organizational repository that includes said catalog, organizational data and the generated one or more business processes.

25. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 23, further comprising:
determining an implementation associated with at least one of the implementation-specific components;
retrieving the at least one of the implementation-specific components;
associating each of the at least one of the implementation-specific components to a generic component to yield a mapping; and
saving the mapping.

26. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 23, further comprising:
detecting an error of the generated one or more business processes by using a debugger.

27. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 23, further comprising:
storing transactional data describing the executed business process in a data warehouse;
and
organizing the transactional data at a data server.

28. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 23 wherein translating implementation-specific components of the plurality of applications into the generic components of said catalog further includes:

associating a generic component identifier with an implementation-specific identifier and
storing the association in an entry of a binding table.

29. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 23 wherein introspecting further includes providing at least one implementation module that is used to access implementation-specific components associated with at least one of: Java, Standard Query Language (SQL), Automation, Enterprise JavaBeans (EJB), CORBA, Remote Method Invocation (RMI), Extensible Markup Language (XML) schemas, Web Services and Java Naming and Directory Interface (JNDI).

30. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium having instructions stored thereon which when executed by one or more processors cause a system to:

generate a catalog of generic components by introspecting a set of exposed application programming interfaces (APIs) of a plurality of heterogeneous applications implemented in multiple programming languages and translating implementation-specific components of the plurality of applications into generic components of said catalog wherein the catalog contains generic components which, when invoked, are bound to the implementation-specific components of said applications upon execution of the business process is employed to invoke the plurality of heterogeneous applications from within a business process;

select at least one generic component from the catalog;

graphically construct one or more business processes definitions, each business process definition including a series of graphically represented activities linked by one or more transitions wherein at least one activity of said business processes invokes the at least one generic component selected from said catalog; and

execute the generated one or more business process definitions at one or more process engines in order to instantiate a business process instance, wherein the business process instance interacts with the plurality of applications by invoking the generic components of said catalog and wherein the business process instance integrates the plurality of heterogeneous applications into a single process by invoking services from the plurality of heterogeneous applications during execution of the activities of said process.

31. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 wherein said business process definition is published to the repository before being deployed to the process engine.

32. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 wherein the catalog contains one or more entries, each entry including metadata that describes at least one of the plurality of implementation-specific components.

33. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 wherein an activity of said business process definition connects to a subprocess that operates as a business process.

34. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 wherein said transitions indicate a next activity that is to be initiated after executing a previous activity.

35. (New) The system of claim 1, further comprising:

a binding table that associates methods and attributes of the generic components in the catalog with the methods and attributes of the implementation-specific components of the applications.